

ICANN UPDATE

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Internationalising the Internet: Internationalised Domain Name Implementation

Moving Forward

collaborating on the integration through ICANN's bottom-up policy making frameworks. A key result of this collaboration is the successful development and adoption of "Guidelines for the Implementation of Internationalised Domain Names". Outlining the principles to be followed in IDN registration activities, the guidelines are designed to minimise the risk of cyber-squatting and consumer confusion and respect the interests of local languages and character sets.

Still, IDN implementation is a continuing challenge and collaboration among all parties involved with respective expertise is essential.

With much work remaining to be done, ICANN's Board directed ICANN President and CEO Dr. Paul Twomey to launch a President's Advisory Committee for IDNs (IDNPAC). IDNPAC will provide the Board and the ICANN community with advice on issues that relate to IDN policies, in particular issues that impact the implementation of IDN especially at the top level.

Committee members are drawn from five continents and represent private, public and civil society interests. The diversity of member expertise will ensure that the committee plays a key role in the successful internationalisation of the Internet and thus supports Internet access for all languages.

The Internet began in a Roman or ASCII lingual context. Today, strong demand for multilingual content and the capability to support multilingual use has emerged in parallel with the Internet's remarkable growth around the globe.

The introduction of additional linguistic character sets, or Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs), into the Domain Name System (DNS) must be handled with care to ensure the continued interoperability of the global Internet.

Many stakeholders, organisations, and entities are

Initially the President's Advisory Committee for IDNs (IDNPAC) is tasked with identifying & proposing solutions to the following main areas:

IDN TLD Challenges: The committee is tasked with analysing the challenges relating to the implementation of internationalised top level domains and suggestions towards their resolution.

IDN Technical Development Challenges: The committee is tasked with providing the ICANN President (and staff) with a list of technical barriers and opportunities to the continued development of IDNs and which the community is expecting ICANN to handle or take part in handling.

IDN Policy Challenges: The committee is tasked with developing and providing the ICANN President (and staff) with recommendations on how IDN policy issues should be handled; the use of existing policy development processes, and the definition of specific IDN policy processes.

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Sights and Sounds: On the Ground Floor of WSIS

2nd Phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS),
16 - 18 November 2005, TUNIS

Beyond the cameras and reporters, the presidents and prime ministers, the plenary and plenipotentiaries, ICANN staff had a few moments to try and make sense of the great cacophony that is a World Summit.

The most intense inter-governmental action took place in advance of the summit as diplomats strove to deliver an agreement on the Internet governance section of the Summit agreement that represented their national positions. Once agreement was reached, focus could turn toward the Summit itself.

The cavernous Kram Palexpo conference centre was ringed by an imposing police presence sporting all manner of heavy weaponry. Once through the security checks, the main area was divided into three main halls with varying degrees of openness.



by JACOB MALTHOUSE, Regional Liaison, Canada & the Caribbean

(On the Ground Floor of WSIS continued on page 2)

English



International Outreach: Resolving Domain Name Disputes in ASIA

Over the past year the Chief Registrar Liaison visited Malaysia & South Korea, as well as registrars in Europe & North America. He has also met with representatives from the National Arbitration Forum & World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO), two additional domain name dispute providers.

Chief Registrar Liaison, Tim Cole speaking at the Conference on Alternative Dispute Resolution in Internet and E-Commerce: an Asian Perspective

This fall ICANN's Chief Registrar Liaison, Tim Cole, traveled to Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia and Seoul, South Korea to meet with registrars and to deliver talks to dispute resolution organisations in both countries.

Cole spoke on the topic "ICANN's Role in Resolving Domain Name Disputes" at the Conference on Alternative Dispute Resolution in Internet and E-Commerce: Asian Perspective that was jointly sponsored by the Kuala Lumpur Regional Centre for Arbitration (KLRC A) and the Asian Domain Name Dispute Resolution Centre (ADNDRC), an ICANN approved domain name dispute provider. While in KL, Cole also met with registrar representatives from Malaysia.

In addition to the many notable attendees and speakers present for the conference, both Cole and ICANN Board Member, Mohamed Sharil

Tarmizi had the opportunity to speak with the Malaysia Minister of Domestic Trade and Consumer Affairs about the importance of the Internet to Malaysia's economy and the role ICANN plays in the domain name system. The conference was the first of its kind in Malaysia and signals a new cooperation between the KLRC A and the ADNDRC in the field of domain name dispute resolution.

In Seoul, Cole was able to host a meeting of twenty registrar representatives, delivering a presentation on ICANN and answering registrar questions. These meetings are beneficial as they permit face-to-face contact between registrars and their primary ICANN contact. They also afford registrars who do not travel to ICANN meetings an opportunity to have their views heard and get their questions answered.

He also made a presentation similar

to the one delivered in KL to a large group of attorneys, scholars, and dispute providers at a conference sponsored by the Internet Address Dispute Resolution Committee of the National Internet Development Agency of Korea (NIDA), the dispute provider for .KR domain names.

While the role of Chief Registrar Liaison primarily focuses its energies on registrar issues, it is also responsible for the dispute providers that administer the Uniform Domain Name Dispute Resolution Policy (UDRP).

Combining outreach to both dispute providers and registrar communities in the same trip was valuable and helped to broaden ICANN's international visibility. **Outreach is a regular activity intended to keep ICANN stakeholders involved and informed.** ■



On behalf of ICANN staff and Board Member, Mohamed Sharil Tarmizi, Tim Cole presents the Executive Director of the KLRC A with a gift in recognition of the ground-breaking nature of the Internet dispute resolution conference.

(On the Ground Floor of WSIS continued from page 1)

The plenary hall was the most restricted. Only those with plenary cards could enter the grand stage lined with hundreds of cameras and thousands of seats. On this stage, the world's leaders, Nobel Prize winners and captains of industry, voiced their views on everything from Internet governance to the digital divide.

Aside the great plenary hall, myriad rooms hosted more than twenty side events with themes like, "The Creation of an International Searchers Network", "The Promotion of the Participation of Women in the Information Society", "ICT for Peace," and the somewhat esoterically entitled, "Technopolitan Dynamic and Contribution to ICT Industry Emergence."

The final hall hosted the ICT4ALL exhibition, home of the ICANN stand within the Internet Pavilion. Hundreds of exhibits from South Africa to Rwanda, UNDP to HP, and Youth for the Information Society to the PANOS Institute, made their home here. This hall, along with the side events, seemed to most truly reflect the great explosion in creativity



2nd Phase of WSIS, 16 - 18 November 2005, TUNIS (Far Left: Dr. Paul Tuomey, President & CEO, ICANN Middle L-R: Anne-Rachel Inné, Policy Analyst, ICANN, Jacob Mathhouse, Regional Liaison, Canada & the Caribbean, ICANN)

and communication that the Internet is making possible. The sheer variety of the stalls, with their plasma screens, freebies, motorcycles, booth babes, and naturally, Internet access points, was overwhelming. Luckily, the standard issue conference sandwiches were there to juxtapose these grandiose displays with their parsimoniously flavoured bread and innards.

But it was the many passionate people from around the world sporting everything from traditional Navajo dress to Saris and active and engaged on ICT issues that certainly added an international flavour and not a just a little inspiration to the event itself. Like the Internet, the summit was made special by the ordinary folks from around the world whose initiative and passion is made all the more achievable through information technologies.

It was these many everyday faces, voices and dreams on the ground floor at WSIS that will remain in our memories long after the lights and speeches have faded. ■

CEO's Corner

Dr. Paul Twomey, President & CEO, ICANN

The Internet governance deliberations at the World Summit on the Information Society held this past month in Tunis were indeed rigorous.

Government representatives debated matters ranging from establishing a new inter-governmental Internet governance council with the responsibility of issues such as ccTLDs and gTLDs, to ensuring capacity building and Internet access in developing countries.

To the benefit of the one billion Internet users and the ongoing stability of the Internet, they ultimately concluded with an agreement that ensured the continuing operation and evolution of bodies like ICANN, and launched a forum to discuss Internet related issues not under the responsibility of existing organisations.

With all of the deliberations and press coverage of ICANN and WSIS during the past weeks and months, one could easily lose sight of the important technical and policy developments taking place within the community.

While events at the Summit make the headlines, members of the Internet community continue making important contributions to the security and stability of the Internet.

At ICANN, the progression of work on Internationalised Domain Names (IDNs), the ICANN strategic

plan, the process surrounding new gTLDs, and the continued review of ICANN existing mechanisms and organisations are all critical success factors in the continued integrity and stability of the Internet.

*"The more we work together,
the better the Internet works."*

As we move from Tunis to Vancouver and beyond, ICANN looks forward to doing its part in continuing to strengthen and improve existing mechanisms that reflect the value of the Internet community, whose participation and dedication to the Internet has made it the tremendous success it is today.

An important part of this process will be the upcoming discussions between ICANN Board and the Governmental Advisory Committee (GAC) proposed by Vint Cerf, Chair of the ICANN Board.

The discussions, which will include measures that could be taken to establish closer

cooperation between the Board and GAC as well as ensure the participation of developing countries, will undoubtedly reinforce the ICANN bottom-up policy process and facilitate a continuously improving relationship among all stakeholders.

At ICANN, we look forward to welcoming new participants from around the world as the Internet continues to reach more and more users. The more we work together, the better the Internet works.



*Dr. Paul Twomey
President and CEO,
ICANN*



UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan (right) speaks with Paul Twomey, President and CEO of ICANN, when the two met at the opening of the World Summit on the Information Society, Wednesday in Tunis, Tunisia.

Credit: UN Photo/Mark Garten



ICANN Board Adopts Version 2.0 of Guidelines for Implementation of IDNs

On 8 November 2005, ICANN's Board of Directors announced the finalised version 2.0 of the Guidelines for implementation of Internationalised Domain Names.

As the deployment of IDNs proceeds, ICANN and the participating IDN registries have agreed to work cooperatively to review the guidelines at regular intervals based on their deployment experience, and to make any necessary adjustments. As such, the revision of the guidelines from version 1.0 to the recently-announced version 2.0 was initiated in response to requests from the IDN registries, and primarily based on the recent publicity regarding IDN-based homograph attacks.

The possibilities of further exploitation of homograph vulnerabilities had been a topic of research and discussion within the ICANN community prior to the adoption of IDN standards. These discussions escalated at the time of the IDN workshop in Luxembourg (June 2005), where a session was held to discuss the potential of revising the guidelines as well as other mechanisms to improve public protection from abusive use of domain names while continuing to provide opportunities for non-Latin language characters to be used in registered domain names.

Following the IDN workshop, a working group of gTLD and ccTLD representatives was formed to initiate the revision of the IDN Guidelines. Given the acute nature of some IDN concerns, the working group decided to produce a revised version of the guidelines retaining their initial format as rapidly as possible, and then initiate the preparation of a more robust instrument with which to replace them altogether.

Hence, on 20 September 2005, the working group posted an initial draft version 2.0 of the guidelines for public comment. Following the receipt of public comments, corresponding amendments to the initial draft version 2.0 and the final version 2.0 were posted together with a summary of what

actions the working group took in response to the various comments.

The resolution from the ICANN Board endorsing the final version 2.0 contains additional directions and timelines for potentially reframing or revising the IDN Guidelines in that will achieve broader community consensus. Specifically, version 2.0 of the guidelines has been endorsed by the ICANN Board for a temporary time period of nine months by which specific recommendations must be provided to the Board.

In order to follow the timeline requested by the ICANN Board, which requires specific IDN improvement recommendations before the ICANN Meeting in Morocco (March 2005), ICANN staff is undertaking the following community coordination actions:

- Initiation of the reframing of the IDN Guidelines (or creating a new document) that define Best Current Practices (BCP), to ensure that the guidelines and other documents will be used deep into the DNS hierarchy and by TLDs where ICANN has a lesser policy relationships.
- Working with the gTLD registries, to which the IDN Guidelines directly apply, to insure that the registries immediately are authorised to amend their IDN implementations where necessary based on the differences between version 1.0 and version 2.0 of the IDN Guidelines.
- Revision of the IANA registry for IDN tables to allow for script based tables (as opposed to language based tables as previously was the case). Additional revisions to this registry are anticipated following the commentary received in the IDN Guidelines revision process.

The forum for public commentary will remain open to provide a venue for further IDN discussions at:

<http://forum.icann.org/lists/idn-guidelines/>

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An IDN Workshop will be held during the ICANN Vancouver Meeting, 30 Nov - 4 Dec 2005

The IDN workshop in Vancouver will focus on issues regarding IDNs at the top level, such as identification and assessment of IDN TLD implementation issues, and of potential risks of IDN TLD deployment to a global interoperable Internet.

The workshop will also have an initial session concerning the continued development and reframing of the IDN Guidelines completely in a manner appropriate for further development as a Best Current Practices (BCP) document, to ensure that the guideline directions will be used deeper into the DNS hierarchy and within TLD's where ICANN has a lesser policy relationship.